

Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 NIC-01 OMB-01 AID-20 EB-11 COME-00 MC-02

DRC-01 IGA-02 /134 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9688

INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA

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SUBJECT: FURTHER GOC REACTION TO PERUVIAN MILITARY GROWTH

REF: SANTIAGO 4565, 4507, LIMA 6397

1. SUMMARY GOC PUBLIC REACTION TO EVIDENCE OF PERUVIAN MILITARY BUILDUP CONTINUES LIMITED TO CAREFULLY RESTRAINED STATEMENTS ABOUT SOVEREIGN RIGHT ANY NATION TO DETERMINE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES, BUT CONCERN IS SHOWING THROUGH. OFFICIAL REACTION TO GOP PRESS TAKEOVER IS EQUALLY RESTRAINED, BUT CHILEAN PRESS CONTINUES FEATURE INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM OF PERUVIAN MOVE. LIMA PRESS COMMENTARY ON CHILEAN ARMS PURCHASES, REPORTED LIMA 6397, AND WASHINGTON STAR-NEWS STORY AUG 4, WHICH REPORTED IN SANTIAGO PRESS AUG 5, INDICATE PROBLEM CONTINUES TO SIMMER. FURTHER CARELESS OR PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS OR STATEMENTS BY GOP WHICH GOC COULD INTERPRET AS ALARMING OR THREATENING COULD RAISE TENSION QUICKLY, DESPITE PRESENT OFFICIAL GOC STANCE OF CALM WATCHFULNESS. END SUMMARY.

2. UNDERSEC FOR RELATIONS CAPT. COLLADOS, IN REGULAR FRIDAY PRESS CONFERENCE AUG 2, REPEATED GOC LINE ON PERU EXPRESSED JULY 31
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BY SPOKESMAN WILLOUGHBY. IN ALMOST PAINFULLY CAREFUL STATEMENT

COLLADOS GRANTED TO ANY NATION RIGHT TO DETERMINE ALLOCATION OF ITS RESOURCES BETWEEN ARMS AND "DEVELOPMENT". HE SAID THAT CHILE MUST BE "ATTENTIVE" TO PERUVIAN MILITARY ACQUISITIONS BUT THAT GOC FELT NEITHER URGENCY NOR TENSION OVER SITUATION. ASKED IF GOC "WORRIED" (PREOCUPADO), COLLADOS SAID "WORRY" MUST BE INTERPRETED HERE IN SENSE OF "STUDY AND ANALYSIS".

3. COLLADOS WAS EQUALLY GUARDED IN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON GOP PRESS TAKEOVER. HE SAID IT IS NORMAL FOR GOVERNMENTS INCLUDING GOC TO "APPROACH" NEWS MEDIA TO PUBLISH NEWS AND EVENTS CONSIDERED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO BE IMPORTANT TO PUBLIC OPINION. SAW MOVE PRIMARILY AS "CHANGE IN ORIENTATION" OF PERSONNEL OF EXPROPRIATED PRESS, AND NOTED ORGANIZATION OF PRESS WILL REFLECT "VISION OF AUTHORITIES" ON PROPER ORGANIZATION OF STATE.

4. LOCAL PRESS CONTINUES PROMINENT PLAY OF INTERNATIONAL REACTION TO PRESS TAKEOVER IN PERU, WITH SOME FAIRLY CRITICAL EDITORIALS AND COMMENTS BY LEADING MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES.

5. COMMENT. FROM SANTIAGO VIEWPOINT, GOP DISPLAY OF NEW WEAPONS UNFORTUNATE IN THAT IT STIRRED UP CHILEAN CONCERN WHICH HAD SEEMED TO RECEDE A BIT IN LAST FEW MONTHS. FURTHER CAUSE FOR ALARM, SUCH AS MORE MAJOR ARMS ACQUISITIONS BY PERU, MOVEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANT FORCES TO SOUTHERN PERU OR DETERIORATION IN PERUVIAN POLITICAL SCENE WHICH MIGHT TEMPT GOP TO USE OF CLASSIC RALLYING CRY OF "EXTERNAL THREAT", COULD BE EXPECTED TO BRING SHARP RISE IN BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE GOC CONCERN.

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